



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

#### REPRESENTATIVE TOM O'DEA

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#### MEMBER

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
JOINT COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT  
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

### Testimony

#### **HB 7251, An Act Concerning Long-Term Contracts For Certain Class I Generation Projects And The Residential Solar Investment Program And Requiring A Study Of The Value Of Solar.**

Energy and Technology Committee  
March 5, 2019

Dear Co-Chairs Needleman, Arconti, Ranking Members Formica, Ferraro and distinguished members of the Energy and Technology Committee:

I am writing to express my support for HB 7251, however, respectfully request that the language of this bill be modified in order to yield a better outcome for rate payers and the solar industry. Thank you for granting me this time to allow you to explain why it needs to be amended.

A number of years ago I researched placing solar panels on my roof. Unfortunately, between the trees and direction of my house, it was not practical. That said, I am still very interested in growing the industry, especially in light of the aggressive clean energy goals set forth in last year's Senate Bill 9. Based on my research and discussions with experts, I have become increasingly concerned over the last several months about the crisis facing the solar industry in Connecticut. Everyone I have spoken with agrees that portions of Senate Bill 9 need to be addressed this session to continue our path toward more clean energy.

All the proponents of last year's bill, including myself, had good intentions to grow solar and other clean energy sources. Unfortunately, I believe SB 9 is about essentially to stop further private investment from being spent in Connecticut. The good news is, we still have time to fix Senate Bill 9 and do right by these businesses and the 2200 Connecticut employees that the work in this industry.

The bill before you is a step in the right direction, but it is not yet a solution to the problem. We need to give PURA the tools to examine a multitude of successor programs, not just the two options currently in the study. We need to ensure that a study on the value of solar is included as well. Please do not tie PURA's hands to two policies that have been tried and quickly reversed in other states.

The best and fastest way to improve our state's fiscal situation is to assist the private sector in growing private sector jobs. As we all know, according to the March 2018 Final Report of the Connecticut Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth, Connecticut is the only state with a negative GDP from 2007 through 2016, and it was a negative 7.9%. Connecticut's solar industry has good "clean energy" jobs and needs to be supported, not attacked. This bill, with the aforementioned changes, including allowing net metering to continue and requiring PURA to include net metering in their analysis, can do just that. If we fail to make meaningful changes to this bill to ensure that our solar industry can thrive here in the long term, we will virtually guarantee the loss of solar jobs and several solar companies pulling out of the Connecticut market.

I look forward to working with all of you on this very important legislation.

Sincerely,  
Tom O'Dea  
State Representative